

## PART VI

## LIVESTOCK, DAIRYING, AND POULTRY

General

Grant County farmers and ranchers sold \$12,555,694 worth of livestock and livestock products in 1959. This amounted to 32 percent of the value of all farm products sold. The county ranked second statewide that year in the number of sheep and lambs on farms, fourth in the number of hogs, and seventh in cattle and calves. Cattle and hog numbers have increased to take advantage of increased irrigated pasture and feed crops resulting from the Columbia Basin Project. The dairy industry is expanding as the growing population creates new local markets.

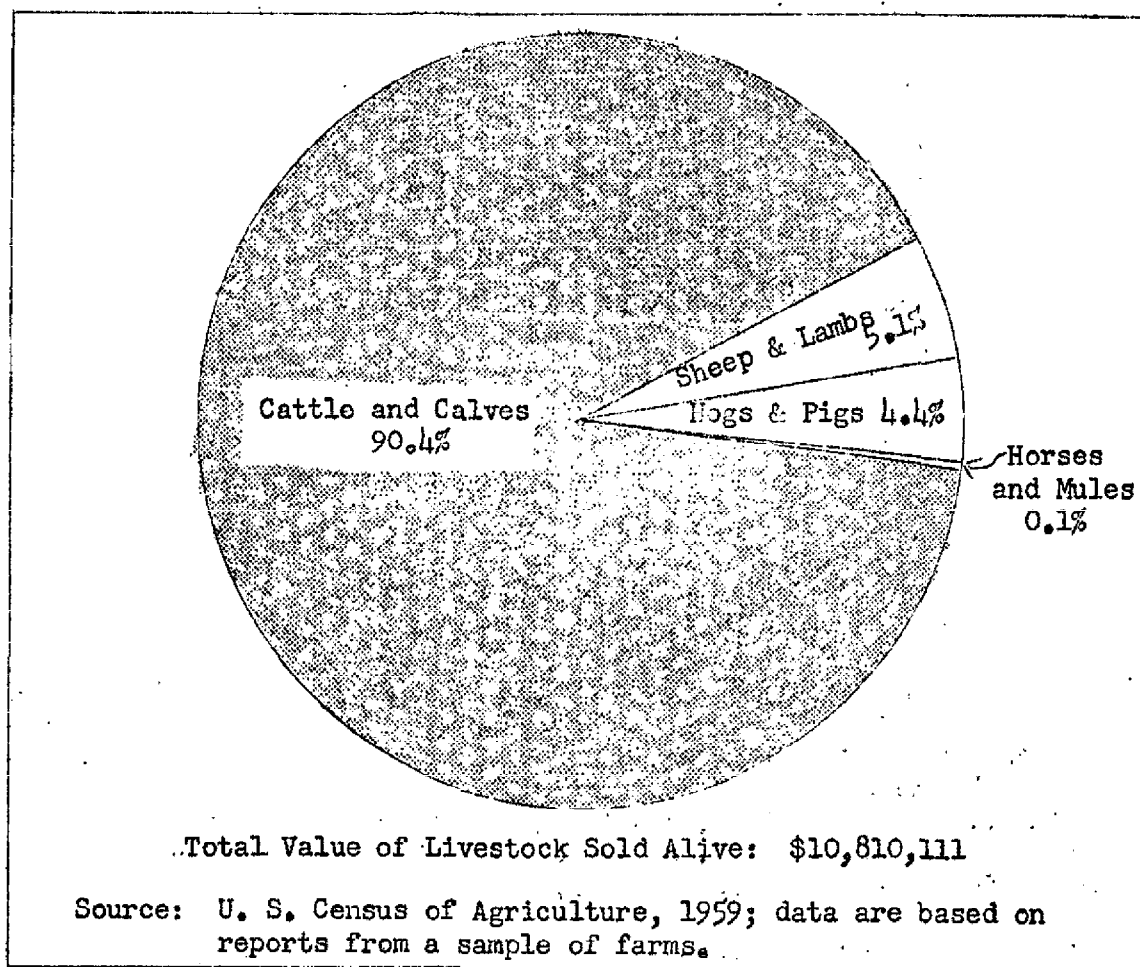


Figure 12. Value of Livestock Sold Alive  
Grant County, 1959

Beef Cattle and Dairy Farming

Raising and feeding beef cattle constitute the major livestock enterprise. Beef cattle outnumber dairy cattle by ten times and hogs by five times. Sales of cattle and calves came to \$9,782,044 in 1959. This accounted for 90 percent of the value of all livestock sold alive and was seven times the value of dairy products sold. Beef cattle have increased steadily, from 14,700 head in 1949, to 28,600 in 1956, to 54,800 in 1963. Most beef animals are Herefords or Hereford crosses.

The Columbia Basin Project has been largely responsible for the expansion in the beef cattle industry. There has been a general shift within the Project boundaries from cow-calf to small and large scale feeding operations. One of the largest feedlots in the state is located near Moses Lake. The increased supply of alfalfa, corn, sugar beet tops, and other feed from irrigated farms has also attracted stockmen from Okanogan, Ferry, and other counties, who move their cattle to Grant County for winter feeding. The tremendous increase in alfalfa has increased the amount of legume hay so essential to quality beef and high volume milk production.

Table 34. Livestock Numbers on Farms  
Grant County, 1949-1963

Year	All Cattle (head)	Beef Cattle (head)	Dairy Cattle (head)
1949	16,600	14,700	1,900
1950	15,000	13,100	1,900
1951	15,500	13,700	1,800
1952	17,300	14,900	2,400
1953	22,500	19,600	2,900
1954	26,500	23,000	3,500
1955	29,800	26,100	3,700
1956	32,600	28,600	4,000
1957	32,900	28,100	4,800
1958	34,000	29,100	4,900
1959	40,000	34,500	5,500
1960	48,600	43,800	4,800
1961	48,000	42,100	5,900
1962	53,000	47,300	5,700
1963	60,000	54,800	5,200

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Of Grant County's 1,497 farms in 1959, 832 reported having dairy or beef cattle. Seventy-seven percent of these kept fewer than 50 animals. Most irrigated farms in the Basin keep a few head of cattle to utilize field crop residues. The larger cattle ranches are located in the northern dryland belt around Wilson Creek, Hartline, and Coulee City, and in the southern part of the county around Warden, in the Crab Creek Valley, and in the Frenchman Hills. Cow-calf operations are still prominent on the larger ranches.

Dairy cattle numbers have also shown a steady increase, although they declined slightly after 1961. The volume of whole milk sold increased from 1,212,170 pounds in 1949 to 31,991,795 pounds in 1959. Farmers have recently been separating out less cream prior to sale, which accounts for the decline in butterfat sold, from 25,042 pounds in 1949 to 11,534 pounds in 1959. Sale of milk and cream brought in \$1,406,268 in 1959 as compared to \$75,606 in 1949—a phenomenal increase for a ten-year period. Additional dairy processing plants have provided increased market outlets. Much of Grant County's milk is exported in condensed form. Holstein is the most popular breed.

### Sheep

Sheep numbers decreased from 46,695 head in 1944 to less than half that in 1949, were about at the same level in 1954, then nearly doubled by 1959.

Fluctuations in wool production have kept pace with sheep numbers. Sheep and lambs from 192 county farms were sold for \$546,390 in 1959, and 171 farms sheared 357,111 pounds of wool.

Table 35. Dairy Products Sold From Farms  
Grant County, 1949-1959 1/

Year	Any Milk or Cream Sold	Whole Milk Sold	Butterfat Sold
	Dollars	Pounds	Pounds
1949	75,606	1,212,170	25,042
1954	346,103	7,896,702	20,580
1959	1,406,268	31,991,795	11,534

1/ Data are based on reports from a sample of farms.

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture

Table 36. Hogs, Sheep, Wool Shorn, and Horses and Mules  
on Grant County Farms, 1940-1959

Year	Hogs and Pigs (head)	Sheep and Lambs		Horses and Mules (head)
		(head)	Wool Shorn (pounds)	
1940	1,305 <u>1/</u>	36,375 <u>2/</u>	319,806 <u>3/</u>	3,791 <u>4/</u>
1944	1,564	46,695	376,863	3,102
1949	1,025	20,036	106,397	1,127
1954	4,454	22,377	185,689	816
1959	11,508	41,076	357,111	1,200

1/ Animals over 4 months old - 1940 only. 2/ Animals over 6 months old - 1940 only. 3/ Wool shorn in 1939. 4/ Animals over 3 months old - 1940 only.

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture

Large bands on open range have decreased, to be replaced by smaller farm flocks pastured or fed hay within fenced pastures. Of the 210 farms having sheep in 1959, 88 percent had fewer than 300 head. The largest bands are near the Frenchman Hills on the edge of the irrigation project, and in the Ephrata area.

### Hogs

Increased local supplies of corn, barley, and chopped alfalfa have favored expansion of commercial hog raising, and numbers more than doubled from 1954 to 1959. Hog raising is generally a sideline business--of 373 farms having hogs in 1959, 198 had under 10 head. Large feeder herds of 100 or more hogs were reported by only 27 farms. Hog sales earned \$471,207 on 236 county farms in 1959.

### Horses

Tractors have nearly eliminated the need for horses and mules as work animals in Grant County as in the rest of the country. A few are still used for working

cattle, riding ditches, etc., but the majority are now kept for pleasure. Numbers decreased steadily from 1940 to 1954, then climbed slightly to 1,200 head in 1959. Horses or mules were kept on 338 farms in 1959, and sales were made by only 17 farms.

### Poultry

Chicken numbers in the county declined in the years following World War II, then began increasing during the 1950's as irrigation created greater feed supplies and a growing population generated additional market outlets. Newly settled families on irrigation tracts have turned to poultry raising as a quick cash source. Poultry and poultry products, including 436,133 dozen eggs and 31,157 chickens and broilers, were sold from 174 farms for \$192,899 in 1959.

The turkey industry has fluctuated considerably, and the number of birds in 1959 was less than half the 13,492 raised in 1944. Producers have tended to specialize in the heavy breeds. Most commercial turkey farming is located around Moses Lake, with smaller concentrations in the Wilson Creek-Hartline-Coulee City area.

Table 37. Chickens, Eggs and Turkeys  
Grant County, 1939-1959

Year	Chickens (birds) 1/	Egg Production (dozens)	Turkeys Raised (birds)
1939	31,667	255,911	1,977
1944	31,576	231,647	13,492
1949	19,795	85,685 2/	3,638
1954	34,321	143,349 2/	5,466
1959	43,843	436,133 2/	5,490

1/ Birds 4 months old and over. 2/ Eggs sold.

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture